

# Festival Bay Mall, AKA: Artegon Marketplace, AKA: Deezerland Action Park

By Ian Scheil



Festival Bay Mall in Orlando, Florida was purchased by The Lightstone Group in 2011 for a total of \$25 Million dollars. On November 20, 2014, Festival Bay was reopened and renamed Artegon Marketplace and redesigned to become what was known as the "anti-mall". The interior concept was reminiscent of Philadelphia's Reading Terminal, but instead of food there were a number of local

shops, businesses, and other such tenants taking up residence in a much more modern facility.

In 2017 the decision was made to close Artegon due to a lack of enthusiasm. Declines in tenants and failure to attract new tenants were also to blame alongside location as the mall is centered directly between a major international outlet and Mall at Millenia, a high end shopping mall owned by the Forbes company.

In 2018, controversial developer, Deezer Development of Miami, purchased Artegon Marketplace for \$23.7 Million. Since that time, plans have largely stalled and partnerships between the developer and other developers have collapsed leaving the mall in a state of uncertainty.

In 2018 Deezer Development was filling the interior of the former mall with a large collection of rare and expensive automobiles for what they were planning to call the Orlando Auto Museum. However, the developer allegedly failed to gain proper approvals, zoning, etc. from the city of Orlando resulting in over \$200 a day in fines by the city. The developer allegedly knew that the plans to add this museum were illegal based on a variety of factors including several violations, zoning issues, code compliance, and others, but decided to pursue it instead. The city of Orlando has taken a hard stance against the developer who has been accused of similar attempts to violate codes in a variety of markets. The developer has also been accused of alleged shady business dealings with the Trump Organization and is a known developer of the organization's various development projects for "Trump Tower" and "Trump Hotel" properties around the world. In 2017 Deezer Development was accused by Brazilian authorities of alleged money Laundering for a sum of \$4.1 Million in relation to a separate licensing deal.

Prime Time Amusement was originally a partner in Deezer's plans for the former Artegon Marketplace. However, PrimeTime, after reportedly learning of alleged illegal action by Deezer, has broken ties from the project. According to Orlando Sentinel, "PrimeTime Amusement's David Goldfarb issued a statement clarifying that they are no longer a part of the Artegon project. 'We have decided to go a different direction as a company in this project, and are no longer affiliated with Artegon. We wish Dezer Development only success moving forward'."

Currently the former mall sits surrounded by chain linked fences to restrict access, except for the main anchors, Cinemark Theater, Bass Pro Shop, and one or two other anchor stores. The mall is currently being referenced as "Deezerland Action Park" by the developer, a name detailing the developer's controversial plans to add the auto museum among other theme type elements to the project. However, the local public and news outlets still commonly refer to the site as Artegon as that is the most commonly known reference to the site.

In February 2019, an article appeared in the Orlando Business Journal detailing continued development progress for the developer and property noting that the project to turn Artegon Marketplace into "Deezerland Action Park" has continued. The development plans carry a \$70 Million price tag. According to their website, [dezerlandactionpark.com](http://dezerlandactionpark.com), the new action park is planning to include go karts, laser tag, bumper cars, a trampoline park, an arcade, 10 private event spaces, the originally planned auto museum, and other attractions. New signage has been erected outside the facility with the name "Deezerland Action Park" as well. An opening date was projected for Spring 2019 after the previously announced and delayed opening slated for Christmas of 2018 was scrapped. However, mid February 2019 the city of Orlando issued immediate stop work orders for failure to obtain work permits for past, present, and future work, failure to appear before city council and planning committees, zoning problems, several code violations, and other issues. City hearings are currently set for March and April 2019.

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